Employment Guarantee Board for Agricultural workers

*354. DR. D. MASTHAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering setting up of Employment Guarantee Board, exclusively, for the agricultural workers; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) One of the provisions under consideration of the proposed legislation for agricultural workers is to provide for a tripartite Employment Guarantee Board to promote off season employment. A final decision will be taken in consultation with the concerned Ministries/Departments soon.

Inclusion of sub-Castes of Kurumans in the List of STs

*355. SHRI R. MARGABANDU: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the sub-castes Kuruman, Kurumban, Kurumba and Kurumbar to main caste Kurumans are not included in the list of Schedule Tribe in Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether Government are aware that since these sub-castes are not included in Groups of Kurumans, Revenue authorities are not issuing the ST certificate;

(c) whether Government are aware of the recommendations of Tamil Nadu Government in its Letter No. 1406 Social Welfare dated 29th December, 1978, and the letter No. 12016/17/81 SCD (R. Cell) dated 17th August, 1994, written by Central Government to State Government of Tamil Nadu; and

(d) whether Government will take steps to group all main and sub-castes referred to in part (a) as one group?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) Kuruman, Kurumban, Kurumba and Kurumbar have not been specified as sub-castes of Kurumans in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Tamil Nadu. However, Kurumbas has been specified as a separate entry in the Scheduled Tribes list in relation to the Nilgiris District of Tamil Nadu.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The proposal is under consideration of the Government.

National Renewal Fund in Gujarat

*356. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of funds under National Renewal Fund spent in Gujarat State in 1995-96;

(b) the details of such programmes implemented in 1995-96 in the State; and

(c) the proposal for 1996-97 in the State to be implemented under National Renewal Fund?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) According to the provisional figures available for the year 1995-96, a sum of Rs. 209.58 crores was released for implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) in the Central Public Sector Undertakings, including those located in the State of Gujarat, and a sum of Rs. 1.46 crore was released for Counselling, Retraining and Redeployment assistance to the rationalised workers in the State. These two programmes of Voluntary Retirement Scheme and Counselling, Retraining and Redeployment assistance to the rationalised workers will continue in the year 1996-97.

Child Labour in Glass Bangle Industry in Firozabad

*357. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of child labour engaged in hazardous industries in the country and how many of them are engaged in glass bangle industry at Firozabad in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) wnether it is a fact that the children engaged in glass bangle industry are becoming victims of TB and many of them suffer from that disease; and

(c) what steps are being taken/proposed to be taken to stop the exploitation of child labour by these industries?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) According to 1981 census, the total child labour population in India was 13.6 million. This figure rose to 17.02 million on the basis of the 43rd round of National Sample Survey conducted in 1987-88. The bulk of child labour is engaged in agriculture and allied employments including house-hold occupations. Out of the total child labour population, around two million children are estimated to be working in hazardous occupations and processes. According to the information received from State Government of Uttar Pradesh, the number of children below the age of 14 years working in glass bangle industry in Ferozabad is 18126.

(b) Child labour engaged in various manufacturing processes in the glass industry is prone to tuberculosis.

(c) The Steps taken by Central Government for withdrawal and rehabilitation of children working in hazardous occupations (including those working in glass bangle industry) include (a) ensuring compliance of the implementation of the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 and the provisions concerning children in other labour laws. (b) sanctioning of 76 National Child Labour Projects to cover about 1.5 lakh children in the child labour endemic States and (c) sanctioning of funds for carrying out surveys in 123 districts and for awareness generation activities in 133 districts.

The measures initiated by the State Government of Uttar Pradesh to ameliorate the conditions of Child Labour in glass bangle industry in Ferozabad include (a) organisation of awareness generation campaign against the practice of child labour, (b) organisation of a block level workshop in January, 1986 (c) withdrawal of 2936 children from work and putting them in 40 special schools set up in the district (d) strengthening the local enforcement machinery by developing additional inspection staff and launching special enforcement drives resulting in prosecution of 693 persons in 1995 and 142 persons in 1996 for violations of laws relating to working children, (e) earmarking of 10% benefits under various poverty alleviating programmes for the parents of working children, (f) launching of a drive for the medical check up of children enrolled in special schools and other children withdrawn from work with a view to finding the symptoms of TB if any and also with a view to securing general health and well-being of these children.

Default in the payment of wages to workers of PSUs

*358. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are complaints of delay or default in the payment of wages to the workers of certain Public Sector Units;

(b) if so, the names of such units and the details of the defaulted/delayed payments of wages; and

(c) what action is proposed to be taken against the authorities of such units?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) Some delays have taken place in timely payment of wages to the workers of some Public Sector Units. As and when such instances are brought to the notice of the Government, urgent reme-